

Early Vancouver

Volume One

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2011 Edition (Originally Published 1932)

Narrative of Pioneers of Vancouver, BC Collected During 1931-1932.

*A Collection of Historical Data, Maps, and Plans Made with the Assistance of
Pioneers of Vancouver Between March and December 1931.*

About the 2011 Edition

The 2011 edition is a transcription of the original work collected and published by Major Matthews. Handwritten marginalia and corrections Matthews made to his text over the years have been incorporated and some typographical errors have been corrected, but no other editorial work has been undertaken. The edition and its online presentation was produced by the City of Vancouver Archives to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the City's founding. The project was made possible by funding from the Vancouver Historical Society.

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Footnote or Endnote Reference:

Major James Skitt Matthews, *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011), 33.

Bibliographic Entry:

Matthews, Major James Skitt. *Early Vancouver*, Vol. 1. Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2011.

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Victoria, Port Moody about 125. I was up at Yale for quite a time, then they all came down and settled in Yaletown, up around Drake Street.

"I remember walking on the wharf at Port Moody with the Hon. Adolphe Chapleau; that wharf, and the (Neeping?) hotel at Fort William was one of the scandals of the C.P.R. construction. The government built the C.P.R., and they sent iron piles to build the wharf all the way from England, around the horn. The piles were lying on the Port Moody wharf in heaps; some may be there yet. The hotel in Fort William and the Port Moody wharf were items in the Pacific scandal; enormous waste of money; cost Sir John A. Macdonald defeat; McKenzie beat him.

"Sam Greer was done out of his land; the government gave everything to the C.P.R., even the Granville townsite.

"The squatters fought, but there was little they could do; some of them had to get out for the C.P.R. 'Jimmy' Orr, the member of parliament" (M.P.P.), "his place was two or three lots west of the corner on the north side of Cordova Street, about where Woodward's Garage is; they pulled his buildings down as fast as he could build them.

"The prettiest little house in Granville, before the fire, belonged to Gillespie, the logging boss. It was on the south side of Cordova between Abbott and Carrall, next to Joe Mannion; Sullivan's was across the street opposite."

NOTE ADDED LATER:

See Peter Clair's garden (photo) almost next door but after the fire—pretty lot of flowers. Site of (about) Beacon Theatre (1936).

"The 'C.P.R. Hotel' on Hastings Street was just a name; McPherson had it and a license; the C.P.R. had nothing to do with it, no interest."

5 JANUARY 1932 - THE GREAT FIRE OF 1886. DR. LANGIS'S SKELETON.

"I was away at the time of the fire, in New Orleans, from April or May 1886 to January 1887. I did not vote at the first election. I heard of the fire in New Orleans.

"My skeleton was that of a Swede who had hanged himself over back of Moodyville about two years before; he was buried on Deadman's Island; that was where we got the skeleton found after the fire under my office. They used to bury people at Deadman's Island, and Brockton Point too, where the gun is; there was no cemetery which I can recall on the north side near Moodyville. Several whites were buried on Deadman's Island; McCartney, one of the three brothers—he had the drug store on the corner of Abbott Street, southwest corner, on the street—his child was buried on Deadman's Island.

"I went over to Deadman's Island in April 1886 and at the time of the fire the skeleton was in McCartney's store, and after the fire they picked it up in the ashes and took it to the morgue. And do you know what I am told they said when they picked it up? 'Poor fellow; he must have been sick before he died; his back is all wired together.'

"I don't know how many were burned in the fire. We had no coroner in Granville; the district coroner was Charlie Hughes at New Westminster. My recollection is that the dead were buried in New Westminster; perhaps the coroner's records over there would show.

"I have forgotten. There was a little wooden building on the corner of Hastings and Abbott Street before the fire, right opposite Woodward's." (See fire map of 1885, C.P.R. map of 1886, in *Early Vancouver*, Volume 3.)

"The only one I recall being burned to death in the fire was Faucets; he was a soda water man; and then, there was a painter whose name I forget. I was away in New Orleans."